

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PORT A 01960 012205Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 SSC-01 EB-07 AID-05 /069 W
-----012224Z 028412 /73
P R 012130Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5101
INFO AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 1960

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS: PINT, HA
SUBJECT: COMMENT ON CHANGES IN HAITIAN GOVERNMENT

REF: PORT AU PRINCE 1940

1. SUMMARY. THE SOLID TECHNICAL AND PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF FIVE NEW HAITIAN CABINET MINISTERS (INTERIOR AND NATIONAL DEFENSE, AGRICULTURE, JUSTICE, COMMERCE, PUBLIC WORKS) SUGGESTS THAT PRESIDENT DUVALIER IS SERIOUS IN HIS PLEDGE TO IMPROVE HAITI'S "ANTIQUATED AND SHAKY" BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURES, ALTHOUGH THE NEW TEAM'S EFFECTIVENESS IN OFFICE WILL DEPEND ON THE DEGREE TO WHICH DUVALIER ACTUALLY DELEGATES AUTHORITY AND ENCOURAGES INDEPENDENT JUDGMENTS ABOUT HAITI'S PROLIFERATING DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS. A NEW AND BADLY NEEDED FUNCTION, INTERMINISTERIAL COORDINATION, HAS BEEN INTRODUCED AND WILL BE HANDLED BY ONE OF THE PRESIDENT'S CLOSEST MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATES. FURTHER CHANGES AT LOWER BUREAUCRATIC LEVELS ARE AWAITED. END SUMMARY.

2. A COMMON CHARACTERISTIC OF THE NEW INCUMBENTS IS SOLID COMPETENCE AND A REPUTATION FOR DECISIVENESS, IN CONTRAST TO THE OUSTED MINISTERS OF PUBLIC WORKS (LAURIN) AND COMMERCE (PIERRE-LOUIS), WHO APPEARED OVERWHELMED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PORT A 01960 012205Z

AND BEWILDERED BY THEIR JOBS. SAINT-COME, AT PUBLIC WORKS, IS A RESERVED, NON-POLITICAL, HIGHLY RESPECTED ARCHITECT IN HIS MID-FIFTIES WHO HAS A BROAD VIEW OF HIS RESPONSIBILITIES. (HIS FATHER WAS POLITICAL ACTIVIST IN THE ARCAHAIE REGION FOR FRANCOIS DUVALIER, BUT THE SON HAS AVOIDED PUBLIC LIFE THUS FAR.) THE NEW COMMERCE MINISTER, ALBERT CHARLOT, (BUDGET DIRECTOR FOR MANY YEARS) IS WIDELY RESPECTED AS A SERIOUS,

THOROUGH, AND COURAGEOUS ADMINISTRATOR; THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IS PLEASED WITH HIS NOMINATION. THE NEW AGRICULTURAL MINISTER, EDOUARD BERROUET, HAS FORTY YEARS' EXPERIENCE AS AN AGRONOMIST, STUDIED HAITIAN RURAL SOCIOLOGY WITH THE EMINENT ALBERT METRAUX, IS A VETERAN VSN (MILITIA) COMMANDER WHO LIKE TO WEAR HIS UNIFORM ON CEREMONIAL OCCASIONS, AND IS RESPECTED FOR HIS DEDICATION TO THE TASK OF IMPROVING THE LOT OF HAITI'S NEGLECTED PEASANTS. BERROUET WILL NEED ALL HIS PROFESSIONAL AND POLITICAL AUTHORITY TO DEAL WITH AN INERT DEPARTMENT, LAGGING FOOD PRODUCTION, UNCHECKED RURAL MIGRATION TO THE TOWNS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION OF MASSIVE PROPORTIONS.

3. THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND NATIONAL DEFENSE MAY SEE STRUCTURAL CHANGES UNDER THE DYNAMIC AND HARD-DRIVING AURELIEN JEANTY, WHO AS JUSTICE MINISTER WAS PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE IN DEALING WITH THE HEAVY CASE-LOAD OF PEASANT COMPLAINTS OVER LAND DISPOSSESSION. ONE OF JEANTY'S MANDATES IS TO INTEGRATE THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS (PREFECTS, MAGISTRATES) MORE EFFECTIVELY INTO THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS -- A CRYING NEED, BUT ONE WHICH IN THE HAITIAN CONTEXT WILL PROVE SINGULARLY DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE, AND WHICH CANNOT BE DONE WITHOUT MUCH GREATER ALLOCATIONS TO COMMUNAL BUDGETS. IN REMOVING PIERRE BIAMBY FROM INTERIOR, THE GOVERNMENT DROPS A PUBLIC RELATIONS LIABILITY; BIAMBY'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE 1964 JACMEL REPRESSION HAS MADE HIS NAME ANATHEMA TO HAITIAN EXILE GROUPS. BIAMBY IN FACT HAS SUFFERED FROM ILLNESS AND DID LITTLE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PORT A 01960 012205Z

WITH HIS DEPARTMENT.

4. JEANTY'S SUCCESSOR AT JUSTICE, MICHEL FIEVRE, IS A VETERAN LEGAL OFFICIAL FROM ST.MARC WHO HAS HELD VIRTUALLY EVERY PROVINCIAL AND CENTRAL JUDICIAL POST DURING HIS LONG CAREER AND WHO STRESSED, IN CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR ON JUNE 1, HIS DETERMINATION TO SPEED JUDICIAL PROCEDURES FOR CRIMINAL CASES AND ASSIST PEASANTS ILLEGALLY OUSTED FROM THEIR LANDS. FIEVRE WILL BE MORE RIGID AND LESS DYNAMIC THAN JEANTY, BUT HE PROJECTS AN AIR OF UNASSAILABLE JUDICIAL RECTITUDE AND CLAIMS TO BE READY TO TRAVEL INTENSIVELY AROUND THE COUNTRY.

5. FROM A MANAGEMENT VIEWPOINT, MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO BAYARD'S NEW DUTIES TO COORDINATE THE WORK OF ALL THE MINISTERS IS A GOOD SIGN. BAYARD, A BUSINESSMAN AND DEPUTY FROM GONAIVES AND TRUSTED COUNSELOR TO DUVALIER, IS AN EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATOR AND A STRONG ADVOCATE OF CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. WHETHER

HE CAN MAKE THE CABINET FUNCTION MORE AS A TEAM WILL DEPEND
ON HOW MUCH LATITUDE THE PRESIDENT GIVES HIM TO SPEAK ON HIS BEHALF.

6. FURTHER DEPARTMENTAL HEAD CHANGES (CUSTOMS, REGIE DU
TABAC, TAX ADMINISTRATION) ARE EXPECTED TO FOLLOW SHORTLY,
AND THEIR QUALITY WILL PERMIT US TO ASSESS HOW EFFECTIVELY
DUVALIER WILL PRESS HIS DRIVE FOR BETTER ADMINISTRATIVE
PERFORMANCE.

7. FOR THE PRESENT, THE CABINET CHANGES, CONSISTENT WITH
DUVALIER'S SPIRITED DEFENSE OF HIS RULE ON APRIL 22, ARE A STEP
IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION -- PROVIDED THAT SUFFICIENT ADDITIONAL
RESOURCES ARE MOBILIZED AND MADE AVAILABLE TO GIVE THE
MINISTERS THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO DO THE JOB.
ISHAM

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PORTA01960
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770195-0872
Format: TEL
From: PORT AU PRINCE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197706102/aaaadlqe.tel
Line Count: 130
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 66e40773-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 PORT AU PRINCE 1940
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2001784
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMMENT ON CHANGES IN HAITIAN GOVERNMENT
TAGS: PINT, PINR, PGOV, HA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/66e40773-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009